FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

107

SECURITY : [illegible] PRIORITY: AIR POUCH

TO : Department of State 755.00/8-1550
XR 956.61

FROM : [illegible] No. 3[illegible] August 15, 1950

REF : 20 Aug 21 PM 3 15

SUBJECT : [illegible] PREDICTION OF NEW ELECTIONS IN BELGIUM.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

EUR INDEX

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RECD AUG 18
ACTION EUR
INFO DCR OLI IE

The Dutch press continues to rehash the royal issue in Belgium, but not in any new has been added. The Catholics accuse the Socialists supporting terroristic, undemocratic and [illegible] methods; the Socialists in turn accuse the Catholics of attempting to establish majority tyranny and of stupidity in believing that a small margin of popular favor is sufficient to support a king. The right-wing Protestant [illegible] generally supports the Catholic position, while the [illegible] is inclined to sympathize with the Socialists.

The socialist paper, HET VRIJE VOLK, however has injected [illegible]. It forecasts early elections in Belgium, on the ground that the Catholics have so small a majority that the government's existence will be threatened on every occasion [illegible] arises. The paper is also optimistic about the prospects of the non-Catholic parties in the event such an election is held; it believes that the Catholics have lost [illegible] the Belgian peoples, and that the Socialist [illegible] principles has won them much support [illegible] established. The paper also predicts that the [illegible] will win more most of the votes lost at the last [illegible]

For the Ambassador:
William T. Hunley
William T. Hunley
Attache of Embassy

755.00/8-1550

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[illegible]

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FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

13 109

SECURITY : [illegible] PRIORITY: [illegible]

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TO : Department of State

755.00/8-1750

RECD AUG 21

FROM : [illegible] No. 351 August 17, 1950

XR 755.11
756.00

REF : [illegible]'s despatch No 305 of August 10, 1950

SUBJECT : [illegible] STABILITY OF BELGIAN CONTROVERSY

ACTION INFO

O DCR OLI

Refusing to let the opposition have the last word, Chairman Vorrink of the Labor Party has written another editorial on the Belgian royal question for the Party's official newspaper, HET VRIJE VOLK. However, in this statement Chairman Vorrink is very mild, perhaps conciliatory, in dealing with his Catholic opposition.

Mr. Vorrink begins by observing that the Belgian problem has been a "godsend" to blinded partisans of both sides, "who wish to worsen the relations between the two political groups on whose cooperation so much depends in Western Europe". In this poisoned atmosphere, he continues, every discussion between serious-minded members of the two parties can become fatal for future cooperation. Too much attention is likely to be given to matters which divide rather than those which merge.

Mr. Vorrink goes on to say that he knows many Belgian Socialists who were shocked by what happened during the Leopold crisis, who have serious doubts about the methods used by their Party, and who believe that other methods might have produced better and quicker results. After expressing his own agreement with this point of view, he adds: "But this does not change our opinions about the responsibility for the conflict...the fault lies entirely with the fanatic elements of the Belgian Catholic Party".

The main question, Mr. Vorrink believes, is whether the Socialists were justified in carrying the struggle from Parliament to the streets. He answers this question affirmatively, [illegible] that they acted in self-defense. And if in the future, as concludes obscurely, the Catholic community in Holland should be forced to remove their struggle for existence from Parliament to the streets and if their decision were a matter of self-defence, they would certainly be able to count on our sympathy.

[illegible]: The foregoing article seems to represent an attempt on the part of Chairman Vorrink to pour a spoonful of oil on the waters of Dutch politics, to smooth out the ripples fomented by events in Belgium. It is known that Mr. Vorrink has long regarded the maintenance of an alliance with ...the Catholics...

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the Catholics as the sine qua non of Socialist political strategy and has defended this position repeatedly against assault by some of the more restless elements within his Party. This editorial, therefore, does little more than indicate that, while Mr. Vorrink is required by rank-and-file opinion within his Party to defend the Belgian Socialists, he does not wish the controversy with the Catholics to disrupt the cooperation between the coalition partners on fundamental issues.

For the Ambassador:
William T. Nunley
Attache of Embassy

Copy to: Brussels

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